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SMITHSONIAN ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY

E72-10194  
CR - 128406

CONTRACT NAS5-21748

Type I Progress Report September 1 - October 31, 1972

Discipline and Sub-Discipline: 3. Mineral Resources Geological Structure  
and Landform Surveys

J. Lithologic Surveys

K. Structural Surveys

- a. Mapping of the Major Structures of the African Rift System  
Proposal number 320
- b. Dr. Paul Mohr OT-306
- c. None at present. Dr. Mohr has begun receiving imagery of the area  
he is investigating (see previous report).
- d. Dr. Mohr has received roughly 100 ERTS-1 images of the African rift  
system and environs, with cloud-cover of 20% or less. Major  
structural lineaments have been sought and marked on all received  
images of sufficient quality. (Note: Even 20% cloud-cover can ruin  
imagery where, as in the rift system, structure is topographically  
expressed and thus 'attracts' clouds.) Thus far, all structural  
mapping has been done from the 24 x 24 cm. prints. The use of  
transparencies will be deferred until coverage of the rift system  
is complete, and a unified structural map of the whole region can  
be drawn up.

(E72-10194) MAPPING OF THE MAJOR  
STRUCTURES OF THE AFRICAN RIFT SYSTEM  
Progress Report 1 Sep. - 31 Oct. 1972 P.  
Mohr (Smithsonian Astrophysical  
Observatory) 31 Oct. 1972 3 p

N73-10373

CSCL 08K G3/13

Unclas  
00194

### Section e. Significant Results

ERTS imagery of the African rift system resolves the major Cainozoic faults, zones of warping and the associated volcanism. It also clearly depicts the crustal 'grain' of the PreCambrian rocks where these are exposed.

New structural features, or new properties of known features such as greater extent, continuity, linearity, etc., are revealed by the ERTS imagery. This applies, for example, to the NE-SW fracture zones in Yemen, the Aswa mylonite zone at the northern end of the Western Rift, the Nandi fault of western Kenya, the arcuate faults of the Elgeyo escarpment in the Gregory Rift, and the hemi-basins of warped Tertiary lavas on the Red Sea margin of Yemen, matching those of the Ethiopian plateau-Afar margin.

A tentative scheme is proposed, relating the effect on the pattern of Cainozoic faulting of the degree of obliquity to PreCambrian structural trend. It is particularly noteworthy that, even where the Pre-Cambrian 'grain' determines the rift faulting to be markedly oblique to the overall trend of the rift trough, for example in central Lake Tanganyika, the width of the trough is not significantly increased.

Some ground-mapped lithological boundaries are obscure on ERTS imagery. This is partly due to the limitations of satellite imagery, but it also seems that present approaches to mapping of PreCambrian terrain in Africa may require radical revision with the input of satellite imagery.

- f. None
- g. None at present
- h. N. A.
- i. N. A.
- j. N. A.
- k. The funds remaining in the contract are adequate for the period of the contract. Dr. Mohr is presently preparing a Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory Special Report on the findings indicated in section e. above.